

Be Prepared for Pandemic Flu: Key Tools for Local Public Health

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health and
The Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts
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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Antibodies	Any of a large number of proteins that are produced as part of the immune response in response to an antigen, which it then neutralizes, tags or destroys.
Antigen	A foreign substance, usually a bacteria or virus, that stimulates the immune system.
Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS)	Also known as respiratory distress syndrome (RDS) or adult respiratory distress syndrome. The rapid onset of progressive malfunction of the lungs, usually associated with the malfunction of other organs due to the inability to take up oxygen. The condition is associated with extensive lung inflammation and small blood vessel injury in all affected organs.
Antiviral	A substance or process that destroys or weakens a virus or interferes with its ability to replicate. Four different influenza antiviral medications (amantadine, rimantadine, oseltamivir, and zanamivir) are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment and/or prevention of influenza. All four work against influenza A viruses.
Avian influenza	The technical name for bird flu. A disease caused by an influenza virus, which affects chickens, ducks, turkeys, quails and other birds, both domestic and wild.
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan. A COOP identifies essential services, agency leads, delegations of authority, and other key pieces of information critical to the maintenance of services during an extended emergency. Local Boards of Health and Health Departments are expected to develop COOPs during 2006.
Core services	Essential elements of public health and other agencies that need to be addressed during an emergency, including the transfer of authority, identification of necessary services, and staffing alternatives.
Cull (to cull)	To kill a large number of animals. One of the methods used to prevent the spread of bird flu.
Drift	The minor changes the influenza virus constantly undergoes as it circulates the globe. This process allows influenza viruses to re-infect people repeatedly and is the reason virus strains in the vaccine must be updated each year. With minor changes to the virus, people may already have some immunity.

EDS	Emergency dispensing sites. Community-based sites used to administer vaccine or dispense antibiotics, likely to be part of the response to infectious disease outbreaks of any magnitude.
Epidemic	A disease that occurs in an unusually high number of individuals in a community at the same time.
H5	A subtype of influenza A virus. The H5 strain can be further subdivided into strains. The H5N1 strain is responsible for most bird flu epidemics in Asia since 1997.
H5N1	A strain of influenza A virus. H5N1 is responsible for most bird flu outbreaks in Asia since 1997.
H7	A subtype of influenza A virus. H7 viruses are responsible for the 2003 bird flu outbreak in the Netherlands.
Hand hygiene	A general term that applies to hand washing, antiseptic hand wash, antiseptic hand rub, or surgical hand antiseptic.
ICS	Incident command system. A management system used to organize emergency response and designed to offer a scalable response to incidents of any magnitude.
Incidence	The number of diseased individuals in a population at risk.
Incubation	The time between exposure to an infectious organism and the appearance of clinical systems of disease.
Influenza	Also known as the flu. A contagious disease that is caused by the influenza virus. It attacks the respiratory tract in humans (nose, throat, and lungs).
Influenza A	One of three types of viruses responsible for flu. Influenza A viruses primarily infect animals other than humans. The other two types are influenza B and influenza C.
Isolation	The separation (during the period of communicability) of person(s) or animal(s) with an infectious disease to prevent or limit the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent to those who are not infected.
LEPC	Local emergency planning committee. Each city and town in the state has an LEPC that is charged with developing and exercising a response plan for hazardous material incidents.
NIMS	National Incident Management System. While most emergency situations are handled locally, when there's a major incident help may be needed from other jurisdictions, the state and the federal government. NIMS was developed so responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines can work together better to respond to natural disasters and emergencies, including acts of terrorism.

Pandemic	A very widespread, often global, disease.
Personal protective equipment (PPE)	Specialized clothing or equipment worn for protection against infectious materials. PPE prevents contact with an infectious agent, or body fluid that may contain an infectious agent, by creating a barrier between the potentially infectious material and the public health responder.
Prevalence	The proportion of people in a population affected with a particular disease at a given time.
Prophylaxis	The administration of a drug or biologic agent to prevent the development of an infection or limit the progression of an infection to clinical disease.
Quarantine	The restriction of freedom of movement of well persons or domestic animals who have been exposed to a communicable disease, for a period of time equal to the longest usual incubation period of the disease, in order to prevent effective contact with those not exposed.
Risk Communications	Communication to providers, the media, special populations and the general public before, during and after an emergency using specialized skills and resources in order to promote health and safety.
Shift	A major change in the influenza virus. Shift happens occasionally and randomly. When there is a shift, there is such a major change in the virus that no one has immunity and everyone is susceptible. When this happens one of the key conditions for a pandemic to happen has been met.
Special Populations	<p>Special populations can be thought of in two major groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demographic Group: This group includes demographically distinct populations or individuals whose demographic distinction may put them at risk of isolation during an emergency. Examples of demographically distinct populations may include racial minorities, ethnic minorities, populations with distinct cultural or linguistic needs, elders, children, refugees and immigrants, and institutionalized individuals. ➤ Health Conditions Group: This group includes individuals or populations with physical disabilities or other functional health impairments that at times may entail dependence on mechanical or technological equipment and also may put them at risk of isolation during an emergency. Examples of individuals with health conditions may include persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, are visually impaired, use a wheelchair, are homebound, or have a mental health and/or substance abuse condition.
Strain	A group of organisms within a species that differ in trivial ways from similar groups, as in a new strain of flu virus.
Vaccine	A product that produces immunity therefore protecting the body from the disease. Vaccines are administered through needle injections, by mouth and by aerosol.

Virulent	Refers to a microorganism, such as a bacteria or a virus that is particularly capable of causing disease.
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